

A Guide to the Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848

Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848
1848

A Collection in the Library of Virginia
Library of Virginia
2024

History

Processed by: LVA Staff

Title Statement

A Guide to the Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848

Subtitle: Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848

Author: Mary Ann Mason

Publication Statement

Date: © 2024 By The Library of Virginia. All Rights Reserved.

Publisher: Library of Virginia

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from MS Word, created by Mary Ann Mason, 03 May 2024

Language Usage: Description is in English

Descriptive Summary

Language

English

Collector

Essex County (Va.) Circuit Court.

Physical Characteristics

1 item.

Location

Library of Virginia

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

This record came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of court papers from Essex County in an undated accession.

Processing Information

Deeds of Emancipation, 1848, were removed from the larger Essex County (Va.) Free and Enslaved records and moved to this Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848, in 2024

These records were processed and indexed by LVA staff for the purposes of digitizing them for the digital project Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative.

Encoded by M. Mason, May 2024

Preferred Citation

Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848. Local Government Records Collection, city of Essex County Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

See also: [Essex County \(Va.\) Free and Enslaved Records, 1714-1857](#)

Records related to free and enslaved people of Essex County (Va.) and other localities are available through the [Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative Digital Collection](#) on the Library of Virginia website.

Additional Essex County (Va.) court records can be found on microfilm at the Library of Virginia. Consult "[A Guide to Virginia County and City Records on Microfilm](#)."

Historical Information

Context of Record Type: Deeds of emancipation and manumission record an enslavers' intent to emancipate enslaved people from bondage. Some of the earliest legal manumissions in Virginia occurred in the early 1770s. However, there was a sharp rise following the 1782 manumission act that allowed enslavers to privately emancipate enslaved people "by last will and testament or other instrument in writing sealed." They were no longer required to seek a special act from the General Assembly. These documents sometimes include an enslavers' intent for emancipation ranging from religious and moral motivations to binding legal agreements.

Deeds of emancipation and manumission essentially provide the same information and there is little difference between the two. Both include the name of the enslaver, the name of the enslaved person to be freed, the date of anticipated freedom, the date the manumission was proved or certified, and as mentioned, sometimes a reason why the enslaver decided to emancipate the enslaved person. In a deed of manumission, an enslaver directly freed an enslaved person by manumission. In a deed of emancipation, an enslaved person could be freed after the enslaver's death by those executing a last will and testament. This collection also includes court orders that record the date or age when enslaved individuals were to be emancipated by deed as stipulated in an enslaver's will.

Locality History Note: Essex County was named probably for the English county or perhaps for Algernon Capell, second earl of Essex. It was formed from Old Rappahannock County in 1692.

Scope and Content

Essex County (Va.) Deeds of Emancipation, 1848, consists of one deed, 1848, of Alexander T. Baylor emancipating Matilda Gains and her two children William and Alexander.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged

- Series I: Deeds of Emancipation, 1848, arranged chronologically

Contents List

Series I: Deeds of Emancipation, 1848

Extent

1 item

Physical Location Library of Virginia

Arrangement

chronologically

Barcode number 1137639: Free and enslaved records, 1714-1857

Library of Virginia